

VETERANS TAX BENEFITS

Even though you are a veteran, you will still need to pay your taxes. The upside to all of this is that California offers tax benefits for certain veterans. Read the eligibility criteria below to see if you qualify.

BUSINESS LICENSE, TAX, AND FEE EXEMPTION

The Business License, Tax, and Fee exemption benefit exempts eligible veterans from municipal, county, and state business license fees, taxes, and fees. The exemption applies to Veterans who hawk, peddle, or vend any goods, wares, or merchandise owned by the Veteran, except spirituous, malt, vinous, or other intoxicating liquor, including sales from a fixed location.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Honorably discharged veterans who engage in sales (not services) activities may be eligible. Eligibility criteria will differ based upon local jurisdiction.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Bring proof of honorable discharge to the local appropriate county/city licensing authority.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

California has two separate property tax exemptions: one for Veterans and one for disabled Veterans.

VETERANS EXEMPTION

The California Constitution provides a \$4,000 real property (e.g., a home) or personal property (e.g., a boat) exemption for honorably discharged veterans or the spouse or pensioned-parent of a deceased, honorably discharged veteran. Most persons, however, are disqualified from this exemption due to restrictions on the value of property a claimant may own. A person who owns property valued at \$5,000 or more (\$10,000 or more for a married couple or for the unmarried surviving spouse of a qualified veteran) is not eligible for this exemption. Thus, a veteran who owns a home would most likely not qualify for the veteran's exemption.

DISABLED VETERANS EXEMPTION

The California Constitution and Revenue and Taxation Code Section 205.5 provides a property tax exemption for the home of a disabled veteran or an unmarried spouse of a deceased disabled veteran.

There is a basic \$100,000 exemption or a low-income (less than \$52,470) \$150,000 exemption available to a disabled veteran who, because of an injury incurred in military service:

- is blind in both eyes; or
- has lost the use of two or more limbs; or
- is totally disabled as determined by US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or by the military service from which the Veteran was discharged.

An unmarried surviving spouse may also be eligible if the service person died as the result of a service-connected injury or a disease incurred while on active duty or as the result of active duty. In other words, a Veteran may not have been eligible during his or her lifetime, but the surviving spouse may become eligible for the exemption upon the Veteran's death.

Unlike the veterans exemption, the disabled veterans exemption has no personal wealth restriction. The exemption is only available on a veteran's principal place of residence. The home may only receive one property exemption. Thus, if a homeowner's exemption has been granted on a property and the owner subsequently qualifies for the disabled veterans exemption, the homeowner's exemption should be cancelled to allow for the disabled veterans exemption as it provides the greater benefit.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Eligible veterans or surviving spouses may apply for an exemption at their local County Assessor's Office. A listing of County Assessor's Office may be found in the county government section of the telephone book or at www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/assessors.htm.

RESOURCES

FIND A VA FACILITY

Use the [facility locator](#) or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

CONTACT YOUR COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

CalVet strongly recommends you work with the CVSO nearest you. Your CVSO can guide you through the benefits and services available as well as help connect you with other local resources.

The County Veterans Service Offices (CVSO) are locally funded agencies established to assist veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services accrued through military service.

These County Veteran Service Offices promote the interest and welfare of veterans, their dependents, and their survivors by enhancing their quality of life through counseling, education, benefits assistance, and advocacy. They connect veterans to their benefits by assisting in their interactions with the VA.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit the [CalVet](#) website for more information, OR

Find the [CVSO](#) closest to you.

VA HOTLINES

[Veterans Crisis Line](#)

- 800-273-TALK (8255), or
- Text: 838255

[Combat Call Center](#)

- 877-WAR-VETS (927-8387)

[Women Veterans Call Center](#)

- 855-VA-WOMEN (829-6636)